

**September Youth Bible Study Synopsis**

Topic: "Natural Disasters"  
Place: Hudson Valley Parsonage (Rockland, NY)  
Date: Saturday, September 24, 2005  
Time: 5:00pm

The September Youth Bible study was held on Saturday, September 24, 2005 at the Hudson Valley Parsonage. The topic chosen for the Bible study was "Natural Disasters: When Disaster Strikes". The Bible study started around 6pm. 11 youth members from both Hudson Valley and Rockland CSI Youth Fellowships were present throughout the Bible study. Also present were Rev. Thomas Ninan, Mr. Biji P. Ninan & family, and Mr. Arun Andrews & family bringing the total attendance to 18.

Roshni John and Rev. Thomas Ninan presented the topic: "Natural Disasters: When Disaster Strikes." Below is an excerpt from Roshni's part:

The key passage that was looked at was John 11:1-45. Roshni began the study by informing us that thousands of people were killed by Hurricane Katrina and many were left homeless. She asked how we would respond to a disaster whether it is a natural disaster like Hurricane Katrina or Rita or whether it is a relationship disaster. She explained that we need God all the time and not just when there are disasters in our lives. We should trust God and walk with him and our relationship with God should shield us from any type of storm.

Perhaps a question that we ask ourselves is "Why does God allow such Natural Disasters?" and why do Christians suffer if we are the children of a loving and caring Father. As Christians, most of the time, we look for easy exits to escape from situations. Romans 5:3,4 says "*We rejoice in our sufferings because we know that sufferings produces perseverance, perseverance character, and character hope.*" We must keep in mind that God changes lives through crisis and sometimes it is the life of the one going through the crisis and sometimes it is the lives of those around them that changes. We can look at the example of Lazarus in the Bible. Lazarus was a changed man and was never the same. Mary & Martha were also never the same as they found a new love and appreciation for life, Lazarus, and Jesus.

Roshni concluded her part by stating that there will be a time of crisis and testing in each of our lives and that we should realize that God will always be there for us.

A handout with Bible verses pertaining to the topic was passed out to everyone at the Bible study. The following Bible verses were noted on the handout.

Job 23:10- "*But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.*"

Psalms 22:1,2- "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent.*"

Matthew 27: 46- "*About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"- which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me*"

Romans 8:22-23- "*We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption for our bodies.*"

Romans 8:28- "*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*"

Romans 9:22,23- "*What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath- prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory.*"

Nahum 1:7- "*The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.*"

The study ended around 7pm.

Roshni John's part:

Hello everyone,

Thousands of people have been killed by Hurricane Katrina, many are homeless and it has just been one of those times that our country will never forget. So in today's bible study we have decided to talk about everything that's happening around us.

Today's Topic is called - When Disaster Strikes John 11:1-45\*\* READ\*\*

I want to talk to you today about our lives and how we deal with it when disaster comes into our lives.

Whether it is a natural disaster like the hurricane Katrina or hurricane Rita, or a health disaster like cancer, whether it is relationship disasters like a broken marriage, whatever the disaster is...how do we respond and what do we do to make it through the disaster?

The bottom line of what I want to say is that we need God not only in the difficult times, we need him all the time and we should walk with him, trust him, rely on him All the time. What I am saying is that when a disaster comes we better have a shelter that is storm worthy to protect us. We better have a relationship with the almighty God that will shield us and protect us and deliver us through any storm.

So, Why does God Allow Natural Disasters? Why do Christians suffer? You might say, well we are children of a loving, caring Father who sent his Son to die for us, so why do we have to suffer? Have you ever asked God the question: God, why are you doing this to me or Why are you making my loved ones suffer like this? If you have ever gone through some type of emotional, spiritual, or physical pain, then chances are you have asked or thought about this question.

One of my greatest fears is haunted houses. I have never liked them. I can remember going to haunted houses, they were so scary that if you just couldn't go on they would have "chicken exits" so you could get out of the haunted house. Let me tell you, the first "chicken exit" I would come to, I was out of there.

As Christians, when a crisis comes, we often look for the "chicken exits." We want out of the trial or crisis just as soon as possible, and with the least amount of pain. But Romans 5: 3 & 4 tell us "We rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character, and character hope. Sometimes the only way out of a crisis is perseverance. One day Lazarus was alive, the next day he was dead, just four days later he was alive again. A lot can happen in a week. A lot

can happen in three days. all we have to do is keep praying and just ask Jesus for help!

The final lesson for us is that God changes lives through crisis. Sometimes it is the life of the one going through the crisis. Other times it is the lives of those around a suffering person. Think about the lives that were changed in the Lazarus story:

Lazarus- he was never the same again. After everything, He had some wild stories to tell everyone. Mary and Martha were never the same; they found a new love and appreciation for life, Lazarus, and Jesus. Job ch 23 verse 10 says, "But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold."

If you are a Christian and have gone through a disaster in your life, then you know exactly what I mean. You could say today, "I am not the same person that I was before the crisis came into my life." God has shaped and molded you into who you are today, and has done it through crisis. If you are a Christians and have not had any "great disasters", I do not want to be the bearer of bad news, but at some point you probably will have a time of crisis and testing in your life. I pray that you will keep these things close to your heart so that you will be totally prepared in a time of crisis.